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ABSTRACT

The research fellow worked in the field of community mental health for one year learning the theory and practice through specific course work, field experiences, selected reading, and the development cf several research designs. One field experience involved a 1-day-per-week assignment over an 8-month period during which a survey was made of the attitudes of community leaders with regard to mental health programs. A 3-month field experience involved an assessment of the potentials and needs of four hospitalized psychiatric patients and attempts to place them in the community. Tutorial work included the discussion of research methodology relevant to community mental health. (Author)

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OEG NO. 0-9-480594-4589(010)
September 1, 1969 - August 31, 1970

FINAL REPORT

Postdoctoral Fellowship Program in Educational Research as Related to Community Mental Health

Dr. Robert Woody was at the Graduate School of Public Health, University of Pittsburgh as a postdoctoral fellow in Community Mental Health during the time period September 1, 1969 through August 31, 1970. During this interim Dr. Woody had an opportunity to learn the theory and practice of community mental health through specific course work, field experiences, selected reading, development of several research designs with critique and supervision of these. These experiences will serve as valuable background in his future work of translating educational research into services for community mental health.

One of his field placements was supervised by Dr. Robert Eisler at the Irene Stacy Mental Health Center in Butler, Pennsylvania. This placement consisted of a one-day per week assignment during an eight-month period. The main thrust of the field placement consisted of the planning and conduct of a survey to gain information about the attitudes of significant community leaders with regard to the mental health programs, their priorities for mental health services and their perception of the accomplishments of the previous mental health planning within the county. This survey of health-related community persons and mental health center professionals in Butler County was then submitted to the Director of the Mental Health Center for his use in future assessment and planning.

Dr. Woody also served a three-month field placement at Dixmont State Hospital, supervised by Dr. Charles Rumble. His assignment was to

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assess the potentials and needs of four target patients who had successfully resisted discharge although judged to be no longer in need of psychiatric hospitalization. The next step was to effect their placement in the community. This task also required him to study the resistances involved in the hospital system, to canvass the community resources, to recommend appropriate facilities for placement and to do follow-up visitations to evaluate the efficacy of these placements. Three of the patients, with combined hospitalizations of 118 years (admitted in 1926, 1927, and 1938) were successfully placed in the community. The fourth (admitted in 1957) remains in the hospital at this date. In addition to effecting these placements, Dr. Woody provided a consultative report to the hospital administrator, outlining proposals for implementing milieu change and establishing better community-hospital relations.

Dr. Elsie Broussard provided additional supervision and consultation concerning each of these field placements. She also met weekly with him throughout the year in a tutorial to discuss research methodology, relevant to community mental health. In addition to selected readings, Dr. Woody developed several proposals for research which have been subjected to critical review. Examples are: a proposal to compare two approaches to videotaped marital therapy; another dealt with a study of bias in ETV broadcasters programming preferences; the third was aimed at an epidemiologic investigation of the characteristics of educational television programmers. Although none of these three projects have actually been conducted as research, the exercise in developing such designs will provide a valuable basis for Dr. Woody's future endeavors in the area of educational research.

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* A summary statement by Dr. Woody concerning his view of the postdoctoral fellowship in community mental health is attached in Appendix 1.

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Appendix 1

Postdoctoral Fellowship in Educational Research in the Community Mental Health Program, the Graduate School of Public Health University of Pittsburgh, 1969-70

The year as a Postdoctoral Fellow in Educational Research proved to be rewarding because of three types of learning experiences. First, I had the opportunity to study, via formal courses, several topics with which I had previously had only a limitedly orientation. Most notably, I have found that my studies in epidemiology, medical sociology (particularly organizational and systems theories for health-related agencies), public health practice, and community mental health have contributed greatly to both my professional practice as a psychologist and my research. Second, throughout the year I had regular supervisory-consultation sessions, primarily with Dr. Elsie Broussard; this seemed to serve to individualize the total program, such as accommodating intensive looks at specific areas of mental health. Third, my supervised field placement, each of which had an evalutive-research element, combined with the supervisory-consultation sessions to help synthesize the spectrum of learning experiences.

Each of the foregoing types of learning contributed to what I believe is an improved academic knowledge of mental health and a stronger personal commitment to continued professional involvement in community mental health and public health work. In regards to research per se, I find myself motivated to pursue more varied mental health research interests than before the Fellowship year, and I believe that the training experience planted the seeds for me to cultivate increased sophistication in research methods.

* Submitted by Robert H. Woody, Ph.D.